



**AUDUBON CANYON RANCH**

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The Honorable Susan Golding, Chair  
MLPA Initiative Blue Ribbon Task Force  
c/o California Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

April 15, 2008

RE: North Central Coast Region MLPA Proposals

Dear Mayor Golding and BRTF Members:

Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) owns and manages a system of wildlife sanctuaries in Marin and Sonoma counties that includes subtidal and shoreline properties in Tomales Bay and Bolinas Lagoon. For nearly forty years, ACR has conducted research, education, and conservation activities to help ensure long-term protection of the natural resources in these two estuaries and the surrounding region. Our conservation research programs include studies of heron and egret use of Bolinas Lagoon and nearly twenty years of biological monitoring of coastal marshes and bird use in Tomales Bay. ACR enthusiastically supports the development of effective Marine Protected Areas to help conserve the valuable marine resources along our coast.

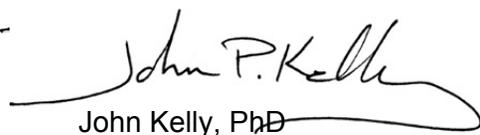
In particular, Audubon Canyon Ranch supports Proposal 4 as the MLPA alternative that affords the greatest protection for marine biodiversity in the North Central Coast Region. We feel that the following elements of Proposal 4 are particularly crucial to the success of this effort: 1) provides the greatest number of fully protected Marine Reserves in critical habitat types such as estuaries and rocky shoreline; 2) is the only proposal to include significant protection of special places such as Salt Point, Tomales Bay, and Duxbury Reef; 3) provides the greatest level of protection to seabird breeding and roosting sites; and 4) retains the greatest number of existing MPAs, which are already known and respected by the public.

Audubon Canyon Ranch is strongly concerned that Proposals 2-XA and 1-3 have omitted too many potentially critical areas to provide for the long-term viability of sensitive marine species. We urge the adoption of Proposal 4 as the most likely candidate to ensure adequate protection of the valuable marine life along our coast. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Maurice A. "Skip" Schwartz  
Executive Director



John Kelly, PhD  
Director, Research and Resource Management